

Madam Speaker, I once again thank Richard Jenkins for his service to the United States and the assistance he provided in the Liberation of Czechoslovakia. Northeast Wisconsin can be proud that a hero like Mr. Jenkins is being honored by the Czech Republic for his service and sacrifice. I urge all colleagues to join me in recognizing these outstanding men and women.

LESSONS TO LEARN FROM THE RUSSIAN INVASION OF UKRAINE

HON. PAUL A. GOSAR

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 25, 2022

Mr. GOSAR. Madam Speaker, we are living through a major international event. My position on the Russia-Ukraine conflict has not changed, this is not our war and American forces need not be involved. Yet, Americans are still feeling the impact of this conflict, reminding us how dangerous our current policies of foreign reliance are in an international system inhabited with rogue regimes vying to be great powers.

Over the course of several decades, through two hot wars, and one cold war, the U.S. went abroad to defeat forces of evil and tyranny threatening America and the freedom loving world. After leaving the international system based on the rule of law, democracy, and human rights, America came home but its officials remained abroad placing international affairs above American security, economic development abroad over economic prosperity at home, and foreign supply chains over American ones.

In 2016, the American people through a collective voice announced its intention to return to our own domestic affairs, as the Founders intended, to disentangle from the system where foreign treaties and global corporations set our policy instead of the American people through their representatives. In short, to enjoy the security and liberty we had obtained for ourselves. But Mr. Biden has instead reverted to the old status quo.

Ukraine is over 6,000 miles from my state of Arizona, yet my constituents are still feeling the consequences of bad policy and poor gov-

ernance. The Biden Administration's decision making since the beginning has led to this conflict, signaling to foreign powers that such aggressive behavior is acceptable and intertwining the daily security and prosperity of the American people to actions of foreign adversaries, undermining their liberty as citizens of a secure power.

Mr. Biden from the first day tied the energy security of the American people to foreign regimes in the name of politics. To appease radical climate change activists, Mr. Biden cancelled the Keystone pipeline and crushed oil and gas permitting on federal lands. With domestic demand not changing, we went from energy independent and a net exporter to purchasing 600,000 barrels per day from Russia which has some of the worst emitting pipelines in the world. These oil and gas profits grant it geopolitical leverage over America and its allies and fuels the Russian war machine now attacking another nation.

U.S. imports of Russian goods since the Obama Administration are up over 22 percent. \$13 billion annually in mineral fuels, \$1.4 billion in iron and steel, nearly a billion in fertilizers, and the list goes on. A trade deficit of over \$13 billion with Russia who is attacking a neighboring state. With Russian economic production slowed due to conflict and the possibility that it could retaliate against sanctions, Russia can cut the U.S. and its allies off from products we critically need.

The damage reflected from foreign reliance does not end here, nor does Mr. Biden's involvement as the source of the pain. The U.S. is reliant on foreign adversaries for critical minerals needed to sustain our national defense, provide health care for our citizens, and more. Russia is particularly influential over American access to helium and uranium, with another foreign adversary, China, controlling other can't live without minerals. Yet Mr. Biden and this majority has killed mining projects across America, including copper and uranium mines in Arizona. Now our source of these materials is at war with another country and can turn off the flow of these materials to America based on how this conflict plays out.

And let's talk about NATO, the trigger point for this conflict. President Trump cogently noted that NATO members were in violation of their contractual obligation to fund their military forces at 2.5 percent of their GDP. But they

have been in breach of this agreement for decades. It is so bad that the German war minister reported that Germany had no military assets to contribute at this time.

Commentator Mark America explains it well: "Trump was not only right about European nations' contributions to NATO, but their underlying defense expenditures are cratering. Since Trump left, they've fallen off a cliff, with reports that the German Army couldn't deploy sufficient forces to repeal successfully much of anything. In short, Europe has left themselves virtually defenseless, with the brief exception of the period of Trump's presidency, with only new NATO member Poland substantially upholding the promise of expending at least two percent of their national GDP on defense. The United States has been bearing the burdens of defending Europe for most of a century now, yet we cannot get them to pay to defend themselves, and there is no will under the current administration in Washington, DC to hold NATO's feet to the fire. In 2020, Germany barely attained 1.57 percent of its GDP in defense spending, and that was after extensive prodding from President Trump. When he took office, the Germans were spending roughly 1.1 percent on defense. In short, don't look to Berlin for help."

So when my constituents ask me why does a conflict 6,000 miles from our border increase prices on Americans at the pump, dent their 401ks, and raise the cost of everyday goods, the answer is because Mr. Biden consistently makes decisions which put Americans last.

Rather than continuing the reorientation of governance towards American prosperity and security which started in 2016, Mr. Biden has turned back outward. But Americans are realizing who stands for and against them. On January 20, 2017, President Trump echoed the will of the American people when he said "from this day forward, it's only going to be America First . . . every decision on trade, on taxes, on immigration, on foreign affairs will be made to benefit American workers and American families." The last year, culminating in a foreign conflict we are not fighting hurting our country, shows the folly of straying from such a simple proclamation, and we must return to a government for the People.